

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR GLORIA MOLINA

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The Mexican cities of Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua have been plagued with the abduction, sexual assault, and brutal murders of more than 370 young women since 1993. At least 137 of these victims were sexually assaulted prior to their murders. More than half of the victims are women and girls between the ages of 13 and 22; many victims were abducted in broad daylight and in well-populated areas; and most were working-class women employed at factories (or *maquiladoras*) situated near the U.S.-Mexico border. These “*maquiladora* murders” have brought pain to the families and friends of the victims on both sides of the border as they struggle to cope with the loss of their loved ones. Many of the victims have yet to be positively identified and the perpetrators of most of these heinous acts remain unknown. The majority of “*maquiladora* murder” victims were members of families living on the verge of poverty who have limited means but nonetheless are doing all they can to locate the perpetrators of these deplorable crimes.

The Mexican federal government has taken steps to prevent these abductions and

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murders in Ciudad Juarez, including setting up a commission to coordinate Federal and State efforts; establishing a 40-point plan; appointing a special commissioner; and appointing a special prosecutor. But the Federal special prosecutor—in her ongoing review of the Ciudad Juarez murder investigations—found evidence that over 100 police prosecutors, forensics experts, and other State of Chihuahua justice officials failed to properly investigate the “*maquiladora* murders,” and she recommended that they be held accountable for their acts of negligence, abuse of authority, and omission.

Continuing impunity for these abductions and murders is a threat to the rule of law in Mexico. Moreover, given the high volume of traffic on the U.S.-Mexico border, these unsolved crimes place Americans in jeopardy, too. Many U.S. residents travel to Mexican border towns to do business or visit family members—and it is not inconceivable that Mexican residents might travel to the U.S. for the same reasons. Therefore, it is in the interest of residents of both Mexico and the U.S. to identify and bring to justice the person or persons responsible for the abductions, sexual assault, and murders of more than 370 young women since 1993.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors support H. Con. Res. 90, which conveys the sympathy of the U.S. Congress to the families of the young women murdered in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, and encourages increased U.S. involvement in bringing an end to the “*maquiladora* murders.”